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# STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

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BAE

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SS-74

## Record Stocks of Feed Grains on Farms

Both in tonnage and quantity per animal unit feed grain stocks remaining on farms are the largest on record for January 1.

### Corn Stocks Exceed Previous High by 306 Million Bushels

The 2.5 billion bushels of corn on farms exceeds previous high, in '43, by 306 million bushels. Only 1.5 billion bushels were on farms year ago. Average for January 1 has been 1.9 billion. Disappearance of corn from farms, October-December, totaled 959 million bushels, exceeding same period year ago by 74 million bushels.

### Other Grain and Hay Stocks

Wheat on farms Jan. 1, 381.7 million bushels; year earlier, 428.7 million; '38-47 average, 334.2 million. Disappearance last 6 months, more than 1 billion bushels, and highest of record.

Oats, 927.5 million bushels; year ago, 733.3 million; '38-47 average, 774.5 million. Disappearance last 3 months, 260 million bushels, 2nd highest of record for the period.

Soybeans, 74.6 million bushels; year ago, 51.7 million; average, 53.5 million. Stocks are largest since '43. Disappearance October-December, 147 million bushels; 134 million same period a year ago.

Hay, 67.5 million tons; year ago, 69.8 million; average, 68 million. Although tonnage is down, hay per animal unit is higher than usual.

Barley (Dec. 1, '48) 177 million bushels; year earlier, 135 million; '39-46 average, 181.8 million. Disappearance October and November, 32 million bushels, highest since '43.

Rye (Dec. 1, '48) 10.4 million bushels, year earlier, 8.5 million; '39-46 average, 18.7 million. Disappearance October and November, 3.8 million bushels, down 1.2 million bushels from same period year earlier.

### Range Condition Low

Range condition is relatively low...poorest for January 1 since '40. Cattle and sheep condition also low...reported the lowest since '35. Early January storms reduced grazing. Some livestock lost...how many not yet known.

### Little Change in Prices Paid By Farmers

#### --Prices Received Down 13 Percent From High

Prices farmers received mid-December averaged lowest since February '47. Index 268, 39 points or 13 percent below record high reached last January. Prices paid (including interest and taxes) 247, only 4 index points or 1.6 percent below record high of January. June, July and August.

Drop from November to December in prices received amounted to 3 index points, while no drop occurred in prices paid. Farmers prices averaged lower for eggs, meat animals, cotton and cottonseed in December which more than offset price increases for oranges, rice, turkeys, and truck crops. Lower prices paid by farmers for food were balanced off by increased prices for feed. Building material prices went down a little.

### Farm Wages Up From Year Ago

Wages of hired farm workers January 1 were 3 percent higher than a year ago. Rate per hour was 60 cents compared with 58 cents year ago (composite...weighted average of all rates on per hour basis). Per day without board or room averaged \$4.60 compared with \$4.40 year ago. Per month with board and room was \$102.00 compared with \$100 year ago.

### Farm Employment Down; U. S. Employment Still High

Number persons at work on farms late December totaled 7,155,000, down a third of a million from year earlier. Weather was less favorable for farm work and the harvest was more nearly completed. Total included 6,176,000 family, 979,000 hired workers.

Total U. S. civilian employment in December was 59.4 million, up a million and a half from the 57.9 million in December last year, and up from the 56.3 million 2 years ago by more than 3 million workers.

## Preliminary Income Estimates

Farmers are expected to receive around 2.4 billion dollars from marketings this January; down from last January by about 4 percent; down from December by 12 percent. Prices farmers are receiving may average a little higher than the December prices, but they will still be below prices received a year ago.

### High Milk Production Indicates Heavy Feeding

Both milk per cow and total produced in December were high for the month. Rate per cow was highest for December on record. Despite smaller number of cows, milk produced totaled 8,258 million pounds, up 3 percent from year earlier and 2 percent above the '37-46 average. Record rate per cow was brought about by heavy feeding and close culling of low producers. Weather also was generally favorable in leading dairy regions.

### Total Milk in '48 Down a Little From '47

For the full year '48 about 116.3 billion pounds of milk was produced, based on the preliminary monthly estimates. This was 3 percent below the '47 total but about 2 percent above 10-year average. (Estimates of milk cow numbers, milk per cow, and total milk production in '48, by States, will be issued by BAE February 16.)

### More Eggs in '48 Than Average

Farm flocks in December laid a little over 4 billion eggs. This was 8 percent more than in December '47 and 44 percent above the '37-46 average. Number of layers was down 3 percent but rate of lay was up 11 percent from a year earlier.

The 55.5 billion eggs laid in '48 was roughly the same as the '47 total of 55.3 billion but beat the average of 46.8 billion eggs by 18 percent.

### Egg Prices Lower; Chicken Higher

Farmers averaged 52.8 cents dozen for eggs mid-December compared with 58.3 cents mid-November and 58.7 cents December year ago. Chickens brought 30.7 cents pound liveweight, a record for the month. They brought 29.3 cents in November and 25.2 cents year ago.

### December Turkeys Reach New High

Turkeys mid-December brought highest price of record, 51.6 cents pound liveweight. Growers plan to increase turkey production in '49 by 25 percent...would raise 39.5 million turkeys. Total last year, 31.7 million.

## PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Nov. 15 1948	Dec. 15 1948	Dec. 15 1948
Wheat, bu. ....dol.	2.04	2.05	2.18
Corn, bu. ....dol.	1.21	1.23	1.59
Peanuts, lb. ....ct.	10.6	10.5	11.9
Cotton, lb. ....ct.	30.52	29.63	30.63
Potatoes, bu. ....dol.	1.44	1.54	1.83
Hogs, 100 lb. ....dol.	21.80	21.10	18.00
Beef cattle, 100 lb. ....dol.	21.40	20.50	13.40
Veal calves, 100 lb. ....dol.	24.90	24.90	16.70
Lambs, 100 lb. ....dol.	22.00	21.90	14.50
Butterfat, lb. ....ct.	34.3	65.7	2/ 71.2
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb. ....dol.	1/ 4.32	4.81	2/ 4.32
Chickens, live, lb. ....ct.	29.3	30.7	28.2
Eggs, doz. ....ct.	58.3	52.8	2/ 64.3

1/ Revised.

2/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.



### Poultry Feed More Favorable

December egg-feed, chicken-feed, and turkey-feed price ratios, were much more favorable than year ago. Feed cost \$3.62 per 100 pounds mid-December; year ago, \$4.89.

### Meat May Reach Last Year's Production

More pork produced in '49 may make up for less beef and lamb so that total meat for the year will be about same as last year. Fall pig crop of 34 million pigs was largest since '45. Indicated crop this spring of 56.5 million pigs would be largest spring crop since '43. And Spring intentions could turn out even more pigs than that...if number of pigs per litter should be larger than average. Trend in size of litters has been upward. Spring pig goal called for 60 million pigs, which would be a 17-percent increase over last year. Likely reductions in output of beef and lamb are due to decreases past several years in size of cattle and sheep herds.

### Number Sheep and Lambs Reduced

15 percent fewer sheep and lambs are on feed in the U. S. than a year ago. Total January 1 was 4.1 million head compared with about 4.8 million last year. Numbers on feed, smallest since '25. Reports on losses from blizzards since January 1 are incomplete; but losses have occurred, especially lambs in Kansas wheat pastures.

### Cattle on Feed Up 19 Percent

Number U. S. cattle on feed January 1 was up 19 percent from a year ago and largest on record. Estimate is 4.5 million head, compared with 3.8 million year ago. Previous high was 4.4 million January '43. The '43-47 average was 4.3 million head. There is a larger proportion than last year of cattle that have been on feed as much as 3 to 5 months--23 percent January 1 this year compared with 18 percent last year.

### Chicks Hatched, Up 63 Percent

More chicks were hatched in December than ever before for that month. Total was 54.7 million, up 63 percent from December year ago and 58 percent from the '42-46 average. Big January hatch is also expected.

All sections reported increases in December as compared with a year earlier: West North Central, 158 percent; South Central, 95 percent; Pacific, 71 percent; East North Central, 64 percent; South Atlantic, 56 percent; Mid-Atlantic, 55 percent; New England, 28 percent; and Mountain States, 18 percent.

### Citrus Estimates Affected by Freeze

As of January 1, total volume of all citrus crops for the '48-49 season was indicated to be very nearly the same as the large volume produced in '47-48. Oranges and tangerines taken together would have been up nearly 5 million boxes. Grapefruit would have been down something more than 5 million boxes. Lemons would have been up about a quarter million boxes. Severe freeze-damage since the first of the month, however, will cut down the estimate considerably. Damage to oranges in California is estimated at about 26 percent of the total expected from that State. State crop loss for lemons is probably about 27 percent. Summer crop grapefruit losses in California are probably 18 to 20 percent. These estimates of damage, released January 14, are preliminary.

### Freeze Hits California Vegetables

Freezing weather first half of January affected some 120 thousand acres of California vegetables. Apparently about 32 thousand acres of melons and potatoes and nearly 8,000 acres of artichokes were seriously damaged. But the artichokes are expected to come out again with a net loss of maybe 20 percent. 10 thousand acres of covered melons in desert areas, planted in December, will have to be replanted. Celery for harvest next 90 days (about 4,500 acres) was hard hit. Very little will be a total loss but yields will be smaller, quality poorer. About 4,500 acres of early tomatoes and 1,500 acres of squash are a complete loss. Four thousand acres undug late potatoes were frozen in the ground in that State. Damaged areas can be replanted or planted to other crops and total volume of vegetables for the season may not be seriously affected.

### Fall Vegetable Goals

Acreage goals just announced for fall vegetables would be about one percent more than the war-time average but 5 percent less than acreage harvested in fall vegetables last year. Suggested for 12 fall vegetables for fresh market from commercial truck crop areas, 253,500 acres; for 9 truck crops for commercial processing, 1,700,960 acres.

### "Market Basket" Values Drop Again

Family "market basket" cost consumers \$675 in November, a decline of \$14 from the \$689 in October and a decline of \$33 or about 5 percent from the record high of \$708 reached last

July. Farm value of the basket dropped to \$346 in November, a decline of \$11 from the \$357 reached in October. What the farmer got for the basket is 4 percent less than in November '47 and 9 percent below the record high reached in January, '48. Preliminary estimates indicate further declines took place in December.

### Farmers' Share of Food Dollar Drops to 51 Cents

The farmer got only 51 cents as his share of the consumer's food dollar in November, down from 52 cents in October and 54 cents in August. It was also 54 cents in November '47. Pre-war '35-39 average was only 40 cents.

### Report on Fruits and Nuts

Just issued, a BAE report on fruit and nut crops...gives production, farm disposition and value, by States, of various items. Title, "Production, Farm Disposition and Value Principal Fruits and Tree Nuts 1947 and 1948 Seasons."

### Crops Last Year 50 Percent Above Average --Livestock and Products Up Nearly a Third

Total agricultural production--for sale and home consumption--was greater last year than ever before. It was slightly greater than in '47 and was 38 percent greater than the '35-39 average. Crop production was up 10 percent from '47 and nearly 50 percent from average. Livestock and products were down a little from '47 but were 31 percent above the average. Crops mainly responsible for the increase in total crop production were feed crops, cotton, oil crops, and vegetables.

### Facing the Price-Cost Squeeze

Paying off debts in good years, variable payment arrangements so as to make smaller debt payments possible in lean years, sliding-scale leases between landlords and tenants, the adoption of more efficient farming practices--these, and other suggestions, in addition to price supports, might be used by farmers to help them face the price-cost squeeze...when farm costs stay up and prices farmers receive go too low for comfort. See article "Break-Even Points in Farming," by Sherman E. Johnson, in the January "Agricultural Situation."

Farm costs last year were up from the year before by about a billion and a half dollars. The 18.2 billion dollars estimated for farm production expenses last year was more than gross farm income used to be--more than in any year before '42.

### Facts and Figures on the Potato Problem

Potato production has exceeded 400 million bushels in 4 of the last 6 years. Last year was one of them--446 million. Per-acre yield in '36 was 109.4 bushels. By last year yield had climbed to 212.4 bushels. Acreage trends have been downward. Harvested acreage in potatoes last year, smallest in over half a century. Consumption of potatoes per capita is down...from 195 pounds per person in '10 to about 118 pounds in '48. Only the increase in population has prevented a decrease in total consumption. In '40-47 average annual consumption was about 301 million bushels while in '20-29 the average was only 290 million. But even with reduced acreages, production is apt to exceed consumption. Further details on the potato problem will be found in BAE's "Marketing and Transportation Situation" for January.

CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE		
INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	Dec. 1948
Prices received by farmers .....	1910-14= 100	268
Prices paid by farmers, interest and taxes .....	1910-14= 100	247
Parity ratio .....	1910-14= 100	109
Wholesale prices of food .....	1910-14= 100	270
Retail prices of food .....	1910-14= 100	1/ 268
Farm wage rates .....	1910-14= 100	423
Weekly factory earnings .....	1910-14= 100	2/ 486
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	Jan.-Dec. 1947	Jan.-Dec. 1948
Milk, (Bil. lb.) .....	119.4	116.3
Eggs, (Bil.) .....	55.3	55.5
Beef, (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) .....	3/ 6899	3/ 5829
Lamb & Mutton (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) ..	3/ 655	3/ 607
Pork & Lard (Mil. lb.) .....	3/ 8292	3/ 7973
All meats (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) .....	3/ 16676	3/ 15132
1/ November figure.		
2/ Factory payroll per employed worker. November figure.		
3/ January-November.		